

in the case of the events that occur according to general law, the relations continue the same, or are made to recur—and hence the regularity of the effects. In the case of the other events, the relations change—and hence the isolated nature of the effects; the same combinations of circumstances, the same adjustment of things, may never occur again, and so as to produce precisely the same results.

Hence it happens, that even when the causes are ascertained, the results, owing to the complicated relation of the substances and laws to one another, cannot be determined beforehand.

There are departments of nature in which every property of matter in operation has been discovered by science, but in which it is absolutely impossible, owing to the way in which the laws cross each other, and the objects are crowded together, for the shrewdest sagacity to anticipate the future. We know many of the causes by which the motion of the winds is determined, but no one can tell how these winds may blow at any given time. Though we had ascertained all the laws of meteorology, we should not thereby be nearer the discovery of the probable weather at any particular time or place. "Not one of the agents," says Humboldt in the Cosmos, "such as light, heat, the elasticity of vapours, and electricity, which perform so important a part in the aerial ocean, can exercise any influence, without the result produced being speedily modified by the simultaneous intervention of all the other agents." "The confusion of appearances often becomes inextricable, and forbids the hope of our ever being able to foresee, except within the narrowest limits, the changes of the atmosphere, the foreknowledge of which possesses such an interest, with reference to the cultivation of orchards and fields, to navigation, and, generally, to the pleasures and welfare of mankind." We see how accident may abound in a

world in which the operation of cause and effect is acknowledged to be universal. This uncertainty, meeting us everywhere, appears more especially in those departments of God's works with which man is most intimately connected. This is a circumstance worthy of being noted. We may have occasion afterwards to inquire into the final cause, or the purpose served by it; meanwhile, we merely mark the circumstance itself. As we come closer to man, though of uncertainty become more numerous. How uncertain